

Year 3&4: The Kingdom of Benin



Substantive Knowledge: **Civilisation**

Essential Learning:

By the end of this topic, you will have learned:

Enquiry Driver:

What can we learn about the Kingdom of Benin from its history, art, and artefacts?

- When the Benin Kingdom began and ended within the context of world and British history
- Chronological order of some of the key events in Benin history known as 'The Golden Age'
- How to use different sources to find out about the Kingdom of Benin (Obas, jobs, crops, animals etc)
- How the Edo/Benin people celebrate and worship
- About the decline of the Benin Empire

Chronology

Make connections between periods of history

Continuity and Change

Explain change and continuity across and within periods of history

Cause and Consequence

Analyse and explain the results of historical event, situations and changes

Historical Vocabulary

Interpret historical language in the context of concepts and questions linked to periods of history

Perspectives and Interpretations

Explain how and why different historical viewpoints and interpretations have been constructed

Similarities and Differences

Analyse the diverse experiences, beliefs and attitudes of people in past societies

Prior Learning:

Children in Year 4 have studied Roman Empire
Children have a developing understanding of chronology

Curriculum Enrichment:

Making masks, headdresses and traditional art

Outdoor Learning:

Key Vocabulary: Empire, Kingdom, civilisation, artefact, Oba, Edo, Nigeria, Benin City, bronze, plaque

Skills/National Curriculum Links

History

NC: a non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. **AD 900**; **Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-1300**.

Children should:

- Place events, people and changes into correct periods of time.
- Recognise and understand the broad chronology of major events in the wider world, from ancient civilisations to the present day, and locate within this the periods, events and changes they have already studied.
- Use dates and vocabulary relating to the passing of time, including ancient, modern, BC, BCE, AD, century and decade
- Devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference and investigate to find possible answers.
- Recognise social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of societies.
- Use an increasing depth of factual knowledge to describe past societies and periods and make some links between them.
- Select and combine information from different sources.
- Recall, select, organise and communicate historical information in a variety of ways.

Key questions:

KQ1: What were the main eras and events of the Benin Empire? *What area of Africa was the Kingdom of Benin located? Map work – Geography skills*
How did Benin change from a Kingdom to an Empire?

KQ2: When was Benin's Golden Age and why was this time period described as such?

KQ3: What was life like for the people in Benin?

KQ4: What conclusions about life in Benin can we establish based on oral histories and artefacts? Which sources are the most reliable - why?
How were the Oba was treated in Benin?



KQ5: When did the Benin Empire start to decline? Why did the Benin Empire start to decline?

Resources:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt>

<https://africa.mrdonn.org/benin.html>

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Science</p> <p>NC:</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Geography</p> <p>NC: Use atlases, globes, maps and digital /computer mapping at a range of scales, including four and six-figure grid references.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Animals including Humans</p> <p>Children should: Identify that animals including humans, need the right types and amounts of nutrition and that they cannot make their own food: they get nutrition from what they eat.</p> <p>Introduce pupils to the idea of ‘The Big Five’ – they are the most well-known of the African animals. The five are elephant, lion, buffalo, leopard and rhinoceros.</p> <p>Working Scientifically Choose one of ‘The Big Five’ to find out more about. Create a fact file and answer the following questions: What is the main diet of this animal? How does it get its food? Is it a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore? Habitat and adaptations? EG Camouflage of leopard and strength of rhino horns Weight – see Cross-curricular maths link for data analysis & bar chart Conservation status</p> | <p>Children should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask questions, explore, describe and explain geographical patterns, similarities, differences and physical and human processes. - Use appropriate geographical vocabulary to communicate in a variety of ways. <p>Locate the areas in which the Kingdom of Benin used to live on a modern-day map of Africa.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">DT</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Art</p> |
| | <p>NC: Sculpture – Brass plaques and figurines <i>What was art like in the Kingdom of Benin and what does it tell us?</i> https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z84fvcw#zmvq7yc https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpvckqt/articles/z84fvcw#z9qyydm</p> |

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| | Material | Power or symbol | How was it used | |
| French | Brass | Had power to drive away evil | Could only be used in the royal court. The palace walls were covered with plaques made from brass and it was used to make figures and heads for the royal altars. | |
| Family and Friends | Coral | Seen as a gift from Olokun, god of the sea | Chiefs were allowed to wear coral necklaces, bracelets and anklets, but only the Oba could dress completely in coral. | |
| Primary French Resources - Family and Friends Resources | Ivory | Symbol of purity and strength | Carved ivory tusks stood by the Oba's throne and ivory bracelets and pendants were worn by the Oba and important chiefs. | |
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| Computing/ICT | PSHE |
|---|---|
| Managing online information Online reputation | Safety and Responsibility: Safe, unsafe, managing risk, money, jobs, rights and responsibilities |
| | <div style="background-color: red; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Music</div> <p>NC:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">African drumming - Link to West Africa</p> <p>L1. Establish that the drum is the most popular African instrument. Discuss the tempo (speed), dynamics (loud / quiet), pitch (high / low), texture and timbre of pieces listened to. Show pictures of different drums, discuss how they are played and what they are used for E.G. the talking drum is used to communicate messages. Djembe drum - base, tone & slap – demonstrate ways to hit and have children experiment. Talking drum Slit drum Kpanlogo drum</p> <p>L2. Cyclic patterns & call and response – including voice Listen to: "Call and response" in the Maasai Mara, Kenya Learn African Call and Response Song Kye Kye Kule</p> <p>L3&4. In pairs or small groups compose a call and response pattern (use body parts and other percussion instruments to replace lack of drums) *create a pattern that changes tempo and has variable dynamics*</p> <p>L5 Perform</p> |
| Cross-curricular Maths: | RE |
| Statistics: Use the data from the science fact files – EG WEIGHT and create a bar chart to compare. | Sikhism: How do Sikhs express their beliefs and values? Coverage: The 5 Ks Equality The Gurdwara |

English Focus

African Tales (see book) & Benin Myths

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-h-4280-yoruba-benin-west-african-creation-story>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-h-4266-bini-benin-west-african-creation-story>

Reading: Make predictions, sequence key events, retrieval questions, key features

Gathering content: retell by heart the summary of the story using mythical vocabulary and story mapping; act out scenes from the myths read and make inferences about key characters; analyse key characters in the stories EG names of gods (make notes about them/role on the wall/write short character descriptions)

Writing: Planning – change gods to own gods based on those learnt about in history lessons; change the creation element of the plot; orally rehearse with a partner and create a story map to follow. Write own creation myth based on stories read.

Guided Reading: Stage 3 [Literacy Shed Plus - Benin](#)

Stage 4 [Literacy Shed Plus - Africa](#)

Grammar:

Spelling:

ORACY: Historical Debate

The Benin Bronzes were created to serve as significant cultural and religious artefacts, depicting scenes of the Oba. The Benin Bronzes were looted from the Benin palace by British forces in 1897 and are displayed in museums around the world. However, the debate in question is: should they be rightfully returned to the people of Nigeria?

Working in talk groups, each member has a different role card (Nigerian, archaeologist/historian, British Museum curator, ancestor of Benin Kingdom...) and presents their argument to the group.

Book study 'Children of the Benin Kingdom' by Dinah Orji

Reading:

Gathering content:

Writing:

Guided Reading: Stage 3 [Literacy Shed Plus - Benin](#)

Stage 4 [Literacy Shed Plus - Africa](#)

Grammar:

Cross Curricular writing:

Non-chronological report about life in the Benin Kingdom (food, art, religion, daily life...)

Y3/4 Statutory Spellings:

Believe, century, describe, early, history, material, strength, possess(ion)